Sibling Relationship Quality in Early Adulthood: The Effects of Education, Employment, Marriage, and Parenthood

Lindsey Aldrich (aldrich@bgsu.edu), Kei Nomaguchi (knomagu@bgsu.edu), & Marshal Fettro (mfettro@bgsu.edu)
Department of Sociology
Bowling Green State University

Background
- Sibling relationships are long-lasting relationships
- Sibling relationship quality is associated with mental health
- Early adulthood is a period when individuals break away from their family of origin and obtain social statuses – education, employment, relationship, and parenthood

Current Study
- Examines how social statuses, including education, employment, romantic relationships, and parental status, are related to relationship quality during early adulthood
  - Closeness, conflict/fights, direct and indirect contact, seeking advice

Data and Sample
National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Add Health) Wave III
- Nationally representative sample of young adults 18-26
- Genetic Oversample: twins, full biological siblings, half siblings, stepsiblings, and other unrelated siblings
- Excluded twins, same age siblings, and those who did not have data for age or sibling type (N = 1,451)
- Analyses are divided:
  - Younger Sample (n = 752)
  - Older Sample (n = 699)

Fig. 1. Predicted Means for Contact with the Focal Sibling by R’s Partnership Status: The Younger Sibling Sample

Fig. 2. Predicted Means for Contact with the Focal Sibling by S’s Parental Status: The Younger Sibling Sample

Summary of Results

Discussion
- Both the time demands perspective and the role expansion perspective garnered partial support
- Relationship status showed the most robust associations with aspects of sibling relationship quality
- Neither the respondents’ nor their siblings’ relationship status significantly influenced reports of closeness
- Wave IV did not have comparable sibling relationships measures to Waves II and III

Descriptive Statistics

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